

From: Jennifer Martin
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2005 4:07 PM
To: Guivetchi, Kamyar; Dabbs, Paul
Cc: Soehren, Rick
Subject: comments on Highlights document

Hi Kamyar and Paul,

Thank you for sending a preview of the Highlights document, and for accepting our comments. We recognize the challenge inherent in summarizing the volumes of information and key messages contained in the Bulletin. We hope that our comments are helpful to you in presenting a fair and accurate description of our water resources and management challenges.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to call.

Thanks again,
Jennifer

California Water Today (pages 2-3)

The figure on page 2 gives the false impression that huge amounts of water in river segments that are designated as Wild and Scenic are somehow consumed by the environment. Most readers of the Highlights document will not understand the subtlety of "applied" versus "consumed" water. While some portion of urban and irrigated agricultural water use returns to the system and is available for other uses, the water that flows through Wild and Scenic rivers is largely used downstream for other purposes; therefore Wild and Scenic water should be summarized differently in the document. We suggest that the statement accompanying the figure define applied water. And, Wild and Scenic "use" should be removed from the figure and accurately described in the text.

California Water 2030 (pages 4-5)

The text and figures in this section should reflect the uncertainty that is inherent in the future, and the limitations of our data. For example, statements such as, "agricultural productivity increases, agricultural water use will decline" and urban water demand "will increase" are not guaranteed future conditions. We suggest changing "will" to "may" in the text to give the reader the proper sense of indefiniteness.

It's also unclear whether the figures on page 5 both include groundwater overdraft or only the one on the right; and if they are for average, wet, or dry years. Given the inaccuracy of our estimates of groundwater overdraft, information on groundwater use is probably better presented as a narrative than a figure, and should be left out of both figures. If the scenario graphs are to be used, we suggest adding explanatory footnotes to the figures and that the same information be portrayed in each.

The Roadmap to 2030 (pages 6-9)

This section introduces the two initiatives, and the changes suggested for those are noted below in the sections that provide more detail.

We suggest that the statement, "Actions to use water efficiently, protect water quality...are part of an integrated program" be moved to the end of this section as it

applies to both initiatives. Its current placement at the end of Initiative 1 implies that it is only relevant for that initiative.

Initiative 1 (pages 10-13)

We suggest adding a fourth item to this initiative that highlights state support for implementation of multi-objective water management projects and programs. The discussion should point out the potential for cost savings and environmental benefits, as well as the public's apparent preference for these projects as demonstrated by the kinds of funding measures recently passed locally and at the state level. Something like this could help to more clearly bring the "Foundational Actions" into this initiative.

In the section "Diversify Regional Water Portfolios", remove the sentence, "Continued investment in our existing facilities and carefully planned new water developments will provide the strong foundation to meet future needs." Move the paragraph that starts, "California's regions cannot meet all of their water objectives with a single strategy" to the start of this section.

"Essential Support Activities" listed on page 13 should be moved to page 14. These activities are important for both initiatives, and the current placement implies they relate only to the first initiative.

Initiative 2 (pages 16-19)

The introduction to this initiative on page 9 suggests that it includes more than maintaining and enhancing the state's infrastructure. However, the details provided in this section do not support that suggestion. The addition of some discussion on non-structural elements of the water management system, and the operation of the system, may improve this section.

We suggest first removing the "Improve Flood Management" item. This item clearly reflects information presented in the state's "Responding to California's Flood Crisis" paper produced by the Department in January. The Bulletin, however, does not include the necessary data or significant discussion of the issues or the solutions proposed in this paper. A "highlight" of this topic is inappropriate.

We suggest this item be replaced with one that discusses needed improvements to system operations, or the parts of the water management system that are not focused on improving the infrastructure. This discussion should highlight conjunctive use opportunities, groundwater storage, water use efficiency, environmental enhancements, and water pricing.

In more than one place in this section, statements are made to the effect that water infrastructure provides environmental benefits. These statements are misleading given that levees, dams, and diversions are leading causes of the decline in freshwater ecosystem health. Water management infrastructure can often be modified or reoperated in some way to lessen the ecological damage they cause, but that is not the same as providing a benefit. These statements should be removed or modified to accurately portray the effects of this infrastructure on the ecosystem.

This section would be more accurate and acceptable with the following text changes:

Change the paragraph that begins, "By maintaining, rehabilitating, and expanding our water facilities..." to, "By maintaining, rehabilitating, and *modernizing* our water facilities...Improvements *may* include new water storage... *The right* improvements *can* increase reliability and flexibility..."

and

Change the paragraph that begins, "The CALFED program proposes...and develop additional water storage" to, "and *evaluate* additional water storage".

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*"Man does not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it.
Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself." - Chief Seattle, 1854.*